

SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger

Twitter @rsnbrgr

This PDF / ZIP / folder / _____ contains first-generation scans and/or photographs of original UNCLASSIFIED historical papers in the public domain stored in the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger accessioned the enclosed papers into his personal collection and he donates this effort to the PUBLIC DOMAIN.

EO 12958: N/A My accession: 18 JUN 24 Initials: RR

Title: BIOGRAPHY OF GEN. GEORGE C. KENNEY

Date(s): CA. 1945-51

Call: 239.293 Volume: 1 of 2

IRIS: 481915

☒ ALL ☐ Selected Papers ☒ Except

☒ copyrighted news stories; congressional bios; tabbed & oversized pages

PHOTOGRAPHIC NEGATIVES

ITEMS W/ TOO MANY STAPLES

UNCLASSIFIED

GENERAL GEORGE C. KENNEY

General George C. Kenney assumed command of the Air University, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, on October 29, 1948, succeeding Maj. Gen. Robert W. Harper, now commanding general of the Air Training Command, Barksdale AFB, La.

Born in Nova Scotia and brought up in Brookline, Mass., he attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology for three years. As a WWI pilot, he flew 75 missions, shot down two German planes, and was himself once shot down.

CMS 69

From 1919-1939 he concentrated on aeronautical development and its application to warfare; for example, in 1924 he fixed machine guns in the wings of a plane for the first time. He received special training in the Air Corps Engineering and Tactical Schools, Command and General Staff School, and Army War College. From 1939 to 1942 he served brief tours as Air Corps Observer with the Navy in the Caribbean; as Asst. Attache for Air in Paris; as commanding officer, Air Corps Experimental Depot and Engineering School, Wright Field, Ohio; and as commanding officer of the 4th Air Force. In July, 1942, he assumed command of the Allied Air Forces in the SW Pacific, at which time the Japs were in complete control of the air, being contested by less than ten serviceable fortresses and a handful of fighters. In a little more than a year after his arrival, Gen. Kenney's air forces had attained superiority of the air in the SW Pacific. During the three years he conducted the successful air war against the Japanese, he became commanding general of the Far East Air Forces and then of the Pacific Air Command. His fourth star was added in March, 1945. In 1946 an assignment with the Military Staff Committee of the UN took him from Washington to London to New York. On April 1, 1946 he assumed command of Strategic Air Command.

Gen. Kenney has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross with one cluster, Distinguished Service Medal with cluster, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, Honorary Knight Commander, Military Division, Order of the British Empire, Croix de Guerre with palm (Belgium), Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold with palm (Belgium), Philippine Star, Military Order First Class of Guatemala, The

Director
Airspace Study
TTN: Archives Branch
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

21 JUL 1988

REFERENCE:

DECLASSIFIED

5-4241-271
0481915

Order of Orange Nassau, degree of Grand Officer, with sword (Netherlands), the William E. Mitchell Memorial Award, French Croix de Guerre, and the French Legion of Honor, rank of commander.

GENERAL GEORGE CHURCHILL KENNEY

General George Churchill Kenney, stocky, bristly-haired commanding general of Air University, was a pilot in World War I and Allied Air Force Commander in the Southwest Pacific Theater in World War II.

General Douglas MacArthur said, in describing him during the Pacific War: "General Kenney is unquestionably one of the best qualified air officers in the world today."

At the same time he was being called "a soldier's general" by "his kids", the officers and airmen of his command whose admiration and respect he won immediately.

A third appraisal was that of "a most unorthodox commander", a title of acclaim accorded him by appreciative correspondence and military analysts attached to his headquarters.

In these three estimates lie the qualities and characteristics that raised General Kenney from a First Lieutenant to a Four-Star General in the years between the first and close of the second world conflicts. They embody his dynamic energy, his imaginative yet efficient approach to baffling problems, and his ability to inspire his men. These, coupled with his professional knowledge gained as a pilot and engineer expert, produced the "unorthodox" tactics which turned the tide of battle in the Pacific.

He introduced skip bombing and developed low altitude tactics which made the Nipponese Navy a duck hunt for his Air Forces. He scrapped the tech manuals and mounted eight and later twelve .50 caliber guns in the fuselage and nose of his B-25 Mitchells and six in the A-20 Bostons making them the terrors of the Pacific. He invented the destructive Parachute Bomb and produced countless other bomb improvisations until they, in his own words, "sang all the notes in the scale, cut through trees two inches thick and a hundred feet away like a knife, and when they land in the jungle, slash enough room for a baseball diamond minus Japs."

He drove his men to perform miraculous deeds with the limited equipment while he pressed Washington for more planes in the early days of the War. And at all times he enjoyed this great opportunity to prove in fact the doctrine that he had been preaching since Bill Mitchell's day, that air power was the beginning and end of modern martial movement and a primary weapon of decision in warfare.

Kenney was born August 6, 1889 in Nova Scotia where his family was vacationing. They returned to the family home in Brookline, Massachusetts, shortly thereafter.

Kenney attended grade and high school in Brookline, Massachusetts, and spent three years at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His interest was turned to aviation at that time when he saw a Blériot being demonstrated over Boston Harbor one day. He and two equally aviation-minded young comrades thereupon began construction on a plane of their own. The result was an aircraft that taxied with all the fury and promise of a modern B-29 but left the ground only when it hit a rock and bounced into a glide.

The start of the first World War found Kenney enrolled in the ranks of aviation cadets. His flying instructor for the brief period that constituted training in those days was Bert Acosta who later was to win world acclaim for his personal flights. The General still recalls the day Acosta asked if he thought he was ready to solo after one hour and forty minutes' instruction. He nodded eagerly but lost some of his enthusiasm when he found himself alone in the plane. In fact he circled the field seven times before he remembered to retard the throttle so he could land.

Kenney shipped overseas with seventeen flying hours to his credit and an abundance of self-confidence. He flew seventy-five missions, shot down two German planes and was shot down once himself. He ended the war a captain with the Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star.

It was during this period that General Kenney, like most pilots, acquired a good luck charm which has remained with him to this day. While taking his advanced flying training at Issoudun, France, he was given a pair of ivory dice by a local priest who blessed them that they might safeguard the pilot through his career. The two most memorable occasions the General can recall being without the dice since, were his crash in France during the first World War and a forced landing at Langley Field, Virginia, several years later. The dice became a familiar sight at Pacific Air Command headquarters in World War II when the General produced them for one throw just before some crucial air operation. The string of "naturals" coinciding with the aerial victories over Japs confirmed his faith in his talisman.

The years between 1919 and 1939 saw Kenney proceed through the regular steps of advancement open to the peacetime officer. He concentrated on aeronautical development and its application to warfare during this phase of his AAF career. His military schooling included Air Corps Engineering School, 1920; Air Corps Tactical School, 1925; Command and General Staff School, 1926; and Army War College, 1932.

In 1924 he registered his initial "first" when he became the first man to fix machine guns in the wings of a plane. He installed two .30 caliber Brownings in the wings of an old DeHaviland and demonstrated this revolutionary method of increasing the firepower of aircraft.

In the prewar expansion period in 1939 Kenney, a major, became Chief of Production at Wright Field. A year later he went to France as Assistant Military Attache and was promoted to Lt. Colonel. Returning to Wright Field after his tour of duty in France he became Technical Executive and later, Commander of the Experimental Depot and Engineering School with the rank of Brigadier General. He never held the rank of Colonel, an omission which, the General said at that time, "would probably be corrected on the way down after the war."

In March 1942, he moved up to Major General and out to the West Coast to assume command of the Fourth Air Force. Four and one-half months later, in July, he arrived in the Southwest Pacific to become Commanding General of the Allied Air Forces in that Theater. The Japs were in complete control of the air, being contested by less than ten serviceable Fortresses and a handful of fighters. The immensity of the task of building an allied air fleet was apparent to General Kenney when he remarked with his characteristic candor to

a reporter, "Nobody is kidding me about this show!"

The General's first task was to establish maintenance shops on the "firing line" to keep airborne the few planes available to him. Then, infusing his staff with his own energy and enthusiasm, he made his favorite expression "Hell, let's try it!" the creed for handling all approaches to the obstacles present in the Pacific Jungle theater. General Kenney threw out the "books" because, in his own words, "There is nothing in them that approaches this situation, anyway."

He had his staff develop a skip-bombing technique which proved effective against enemy shipping, but this still didn't satisfy him. He then asked for a special fuse bomb which could be lobbed against the side of the ships by "buzzing" aircraft. This operation required an on-the-deck flight approach that would make the plane a ready target for deck gun crews. To combat this enemy fire General Kenney mounted first eight and later twelve .50 caliber guns on the B-25's and six in the A-20's and experimented with them till the "bugs" were out. This produced a firepower that silenced the deck guns and paved an effective weapon in clearing the jungles of enemy ground troops.

One well known payoff came in March 1943 in the Bismarck Sea when Kenney's air armada intercepted a Jap convoy of cargo and transport vessels escorted by destroyers and heavily defended by fighter aircraft. The convoy was practically annihilated and ninety-five Jap fighters were blasted from the sky at a cost of only four allied aircraft. This Jap attempt to reinforce the Lae garrisons in New Guinea failed and as a result of this disaster the Jap High Command at Tokyo decided that no more convoys were to attempt the voyage to Lae.

In a little more than a year after his arrival General Kenney's air forces had beaten off the Japanese aerial attacks in Australia and approaches, bombed Jap bases to the North, during the Papuan campaign supplied by air an entire allied force of two divisions with materiel, troops, ammunition, hospitals, etc., driven to cover the portion of the Jap shipping they hadn't sunk, and wrested superiority of the air in the Southwest Pacific. The Paratroop operation at Nadzab, New Guinea, and the seizing of the Markham-Ramu Valley, during the fall of 1943, with an airborne, air supplied infantry division are still regarded as models of this type of warfare.

During the three years he conducted the successful air war against the Japanese, in addition to leading the Allied Air Forces, the General became Commanding General, Far East Air Forces and, following the Japanese surrender, Commanding General, Pacific Air Command. He added a third star in September 1942, and a fourth star in March 1945.

Returning to the States after the war General Kenney served as Senior United States Military Representative on the Military Staff Committee of the United Nations from January 1, 1946 to October 15, 1946.

General Kenney was Commanding General of the Strategic Air Command prior to assuming command of the Air University on October 29, 1948.

General Kenney has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster; Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; Silver Star;

Distinguished Flying Cross; Purple Heart; and Honorary Knight Commander, Military Division, Order of the British Empire.

Additional decorations awarded to General Kenney include: Philippine Star; Military Order First Class of Guatemala; Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold with Palm (Belgium); the Croix de Guerre 1940 with Palm (Belgium); The Order of Orange Nassau, degree of Grand Officer, with sword (Netherlands); the William E. Mitchell Memorial Award, French Croix de Guerre, and the French Legion of Honor, rank of commander.

The General is short and of stocky build. His wiry gray hair is worn in a crew cut which bristles above his square, rugged face. His conversation is punctuated with remarks stemming from a keen and lively sense of humor and expressed in picturesque and interesting language. He has a frank and disarming cordiality in dealing with his men.

General and Mrs. Kenney reside on Maxwell Air Force Base. A son, William, is a First Lieutenant in the United States Air Force, and a daughter, Julia, is married to Lt. E. C. Hoagland, USAF.

(GENERAL KENNEY RECEIVES DECORATIONS)
THROUGHOUT 1949-50

The only living man to possess the key to the City of Montgomery is General George C. Kenney, Commanding General of the Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. Five years after the end of hostilities of World War II, he is still being decorated in recognition of his achievements in the effective employment of Air Power in the Allied offensive in the Southwest Pacific, and as one of the most distinguished military leaders in the Air Force today.

His most recent award was the presentation in Wichita, Ka., May 1, of the Wichita Rotary Club's Outstanding Citizenship medal, "in recognition of the many contributions he has made to his country and as the outstanding Air Officer in the world today." General Kenney accepted the medal from Col. A. E. Howse, Rotary chairman, who was formerly a member of the General's staff during the early days of the war. This is only the second time the award has been made, the first being presented to General Leslie Groves, U. S. Army.

Numerous Awards in 1949

During the past year, General Kenney, one of ~~the~~ three four-starred Generals in the U. S. Air Force, has received numerous awards from both civilian and military groups.

In February 1949, Mayor John L. Goodwyn of Montgomery, Ala., formally presented to General Kenney a golden key to the City, at the annual Montgomery Chamber of Commerce dinner. In making the presentation, Mayor Goodwyn called the general "the embodiment

of the finest traditions of the Air Force. His record has formed an illustrious page in Air Force history."

In further tribute to the General's command, which General Kenney assumed in October 1948, Mayor Goodwyn said "Our great Air University is exceeded by no other installation in the Air Force." He paid tribute to the personnel of both air bases here and said that there has always existed between these bases and Montgomery excellent cooperation. He declared that "Maxwell is as important to our city as the state capitol itself."

General Kenney in accepting the key said he regarded it as a symbol of friendship between the Air Forces and Montgomery, "I want this friendship to continue as long as there is a flying field here and as long as there is a Montgomery."

Foreign Decorations

To add to his many foreign awards, General Kenney received recognition this past year from France and the Netherlands.

One of The Netherlands highest awards, the Order of Orange Nassau with Sword, in the degree of Grand Officer, was presented to General Kenney on April 20, 1949, by Ambassador to the United States E. N. van Kleffens.

The presentation was made by the Netherlands ambassador, senior Netherlands representative to the United Nations, "in the name of Queen Juliana" for the part General Kenney played in liberating Southern Pacific areas and people...."for his outstanding contribution of directing the air war against Japan from 1942-45."

The ceremony took place in the General's office at the Air University, with several of his former Fifth Air Force officers

and Mrs. Kenney on hand to offer congratulations.

At a ceremony in the French Embassy, Air Attache Annex, Washington, D. C., on June 14, 1949, General Kenney was presented the French Legion of Honor and the Croix de Guerre with palm. Brig. General Charles Lamsin, Military Attache of France, made the presentation. An interpretation of the document appointing General Kenney in the National Order of the Legion of Honor with the rank of Commander referred to him as "general officer of the first magnitude (who) after having participated in a particularly brilliant manner as a lieutenant pilot in the war of 1914-18 on the soil of France, during the years 1942-45 took a very active part in the liberation of the French territories of the French Union by his energetic action in the Pacific Theater of Operations."

Receives Billy Mitchell Award

The William E. Mitchell Memorial award was presented to General Kenney on April 28, 1949. William S. Roache, commander of Aviators Post 743, American Legion of New York, made the presentation for the award committee of his post at formal ceremonies in connection with an American Legion banquet in the Savoy Plaza Hotel in New York City.

Post 743 was founded in 1920 with General Mitchell as one of its charter members. The award committee selected General Kenney for this honor because of "his untiring efforts in the development of long-range strategic bombardment the results of which were graphically exhibited by the B-50 flight around the world and the B-36 record-breaking non-stop flight in the States."

General Kenney, the seventh aviator to receive the distinguished recognition, accepted the award and acknowledged "the debt that I owe

to the tens of thousands of valiant young Americans under my command, who by their loyal cooperation, their astounding performance of duty in the face of adversity, their sacrifices, are really responsible for my receiving it here tonight."

Inscribed on the bronze plaque, mounted on oak and at the top of which is a bust of General Mitchell, are these words: "Presented to General George C. Kenney as the U. S. Citizen making the outstanding individual contribution to aviation progress."

Honorary Citizen

Honorary citizenship was bestowed upon General Kenney by the City of Kankakee, Ill., in October 1949. The certificate reads: "By order of the Honorable Mayor and the Council of the City of Kankakee, in recognition of the contribution made toward the progress of this Key City of Illinois, honorary citizenship is hereby bestowed upon General George C. Kenney."

He previously had been a guest speaker at the 40th annual meeting of the Kankakee Chamber of Commerce.

In a resolution adopted the National Exchange Club at its 31st annual convention in Minneapolis, Minn., October 1949, the club expressed appreciation for General Kenney's "untiring efforts in preserving the American Way of Life."

War Record

In July 1942, General Kenney assumed duty as Commanding General, Allied Air Forces in the Southwest Pacific. At that time the Japanese were in complete control of the air, being contested by less than ten serviceable Fortresses and a handful of fighters. In his book "General Kenney's Report" he tells just how he went about overcoming these odds.

In a little more than a year after his arrival his air forces had beaten off the Jap aerial attacks in Australia and approaches, and wrested superiority of the air in the Southwest Pacific. During the three years he conducted the successful air war against the Japanese, in addition to leading the Allied Air Forces, he became Commanding General, Far East Air Forces and following the Japanese surrender, Commanding General, Pacific Air Command. He added a third star in September 1942, and a fourth in March 1945.

In summary, General Kenney's military awards include: The William E. Mitchell Memorial Award, Distinguished Service Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster; Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; Silver Star; Distinguished Flying Cross; Purple Heart; World War I Victory Medal; American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; Philippine Liberation Ribbon and the World War II Victory Medal.

His foreign awards are: Philippine Star; Military Order First Class of Guatemala; Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold with Palm (Belgium); the Croix de Guerre 1940 with Palm (Belgium); the Order of Orange Nassau, degree of Grand Officer with sword (Netherlands); French Croix de Guerre with palm; and the French Legion of Honor, rank of commander.

GENERAL KENNEY IS RETIRED

It was a gala but poignant occasion last Friday afternoon, 31 August, when General George C. Kenney was retired from active duty in the United States Air Force.

In tribute to his long and distinguished service, a military review was held at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington.

The dynamic commander who led Allied Air Forces to victory against Japan in World War II, seemed anything but retiring as he took the salute of troops marching past and airplanes parading overhead in thundering might.

The second senior officer in the U.S. Air Force, General Kenney has been a major force in its growth from a fledgling of a few squadrons in World War I into the global power it is today.

On hand for the honor ceremonies at Bolling were General Army Douglas MacArthur, Chief of Staff of the USAF, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, his deputies and directors; the Secretary of the Air Force, Honorable Thomas K. Finletter and his top assistants; the major commanders of the Air Force, and many other high ranking military and civilian dignitaries and friends of the General. Following the review, a reception honoring General and Mrs. Kenney was held at the Bolling AFB Officers Club.

A similar ceremony had preceded this one, on Tuesday, 28 August, when General Kenney departed from Maxwell AFB, Alabama, his headquarters as Commanding General of the Air University during the past three years. More than 3,000 Air Force personnel from Maxwell and Gunter AF Bases and civilians from nearby Montgomery gathered to witness a farewell parade and to bid farewell to General and Mrs. Kenney.

One of the highlights of this ceremony was the dedicatory rendering of "The General George C. Kenney March," composed and arranged by two members of the 604th AF Band at Maxwell.

Popular esteem for the Kenneys was summed up in recent editorials in the local Montgomery newspapers: - "Montgomery will regret to say goodbye to General George C. Kenney...He has made many friends in the city...has always been cooperative when his help was needed...helped to continue the policy which has always bound Montgomery and Maxwell Air Force Base together... No Air Force man has had a more brilliant career than General Kenney....The general during his assignment here has become a part of Montgomery. He will be greatly missed...."

General Kenney is the only person now living who has been made an honorary citizen of Montgomery and presented the key to the city. This honor was conferred on him in 1949. On a recent occasion, several Montgomery civic groups gave an appreciation dinner honoring General and Mrs. Kenney and presented them with a huge silver tray inscribed with good wishes.

Described by General Douglas MacArthur as "one of the best qualified air officers in the world today," General Kenney has also been called "a soldier's general" and "an unorthodox commander."

These clues give an insight to the character of the man whose rise to four-star rank was marked by superior accomplishments, a dynamic energy, an imaginative yet efficient approach to baffling problems, and an ability to inspire his men. These, coupled with his professional knowledge gained as a pilot and engineer, produced the "unorthodox" tactics which turned the tide of battle in the Pacific.

He inspired his men to perform miraculous deeds with limited equipment while he pressed Washington for more planes in the early days of the War. At all times, he enjoyed this opportunity to prove in fact the doctrine that he had been preaching since Billy Mitchell's day, that air power is the primary weapon of decision in modern warfare.

He was born August 6, 1889, in Nova Scotia while his family was vacationing there, but was brought to the family home in Brookline, Massachusetts, shortly afterward. He attended grade and high school in Brookline and spent three years at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He became interested in aviation during that time, when he saw a Bleriot being demonstrated over Boston Harbor. He and two other young aviation enthusiasts promptly constructed an airplane of their own which taxied with all the fury and promise of a modern B-29 but left the ground only when it hit a rock and bounced into a glide.

At the start of the first World War, Kenney enrolled as an aviation cadet. Bert Acosta, of later fame, was his flying instructor. After one hour and 40 minutes' instruction, Kenney soloed, but had to circle the field several times before remembering to retard the throttle so he could land.

Shipped overseas after only 17 flying hours, he flew 75 combat missions, shot down two German planes. He ended the war a captain and with the Distinguished Service Cross and Silver Star. At the time the Purple Heart was offered to him as he lay in the hospital with injuries sustained in what he thought was merely a forced landing, he declined it, only to learn later that evidence found in the wreckage proved his "forced landing" had been caused by enemy anti-aircraft gunfire.

In the years after the war, he concentrated on aeronautical development and its application to warfare. He attended the Air Corps Engineering School in 1920, Air Corps Tactical School in 1924, Command and General Staff School in 1926, and Army War College in 1932.

He registered the first of many "firsts" in 1924 when he put two

Browning 30-caliber guns in the wings of a DH-4 to increase its firepower for attack of ground targets, thus starting the present practice of multi-gun installations in the wings of our fighter and attack types.

As a major in 1939, he became Chief of Production at Wright Field. A year later he went to France as Assistant Military Attache and was promoted to lieutenant colonel. Returning at the end of this tour to Wright Field, he became Technical Executive and later Commander of the Experimental Depot and Engineering School with the rank of Brigadier General.

In March 1942, he moved up to Major General and out to the West Coast to command the Fourth Air Force. The following July found him in the Southwest Pacific Theater as Commanding General of the Allied Air Forces.

He found that he had joined up with the losing side in that war. The Japs were in complete control of the air and Australia seemed to be their next stop. The new Air Commander set out to change all that. Instead of regarding Port Moresby as a toe-hold to be lost, he established an air depot alongside the combat airdromes there to hurry up maintenance, repair and assembly of aircraft, kept them in the air, started giving the Japs a fight and pushing them back. The obstacles found in this jungle theater were met, with new and untried but effective solutions.

A parachute fragmentation bomb which General Kenney had developed in 1928 was first employed in war on 12 September 1942 when eight low-flying attack planes destroyed all seventeen Jap planes on the ground at Buna, New Guinea. Hundreds of thousands of these bombs were immediately ordered and used with great success during the remainder of the Pacific War.

He developed a skip bombing technique which proved highly effective against enemy shipping. Using a special delay fuse, bombs were dropped

from level flight at 50 feet or less altitude, and allowed to skip against the side of a ship. So that his planes would not be victims of deck guns when they buzzed in just off the water, he mounted as many as twelve machine guns on B-25s and six on A-20s, producing a firepower that silenced the deck guns. This arrangement also proved effective in clearing the jungles of enemy ground troops.

One pay-off was the tremendous U.S. victory of the Bismarck Sea when a Jap convoy of cargo and transport vessels, heavily defended by destroyers and fighter aircraft, was intercepted and practically annihilated. Ninety-five Nip fighters were blasted from the sky at a cost of only four allied aircraft. This ended the Jap attempts to reinforce the Lae garrisons in New Guinea.

During the Papuan campaign in 1942, large numbers of troops were moved by air from Australia to New Guinea and flown over the 13,000-foot Owen Stanley Mountains to grass plains a few miles from the Jap stronghold at Buna. These troops, one American and one Australian infantry division, were supplied entirely by air during a large part of the two months' campaign. This was the first "air envelopment" executed by American forces.

The paratroop operation at Nadzab, New Guinea, and the seizing of the Markham-Ramu Valley with an airborne air-supplied infantry division, still are regarded as models of this type of warfare.

In a little more than a year after his arrival, General Kenney's air forces had beaten off the Jap aerial attacks on Australia, driven to cover that portion of Jap shipping that hadn't sunk, and wrested superiority of the air in the Southwest Pacific.

In the Philippine campaigns in 1944 and 1945, Napalm was developed

into mass formation use by hundreds of planes at a time, with success later exploited in the Korean war using the same methods and tactics.

At the end of the war General Kenney was Commanding General, Far East Air Forces, and following the surrender, Commanding General, Pacific Air Command.

Upon returning to the States, he served as Senior United States Representative on the Military Staff Committee of the United Nations from January 1, 1946 to October 15, 1946.

He then was Commanding General of the Strategic Air Command until he assumed command of the Air University on 1 November 1948.

General Kenney has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster; Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; Silver Star; Distinguished Flying Cross; Purple Heart; Legion of Merit and Bronze Star.

Additional decorations include Honorary Knight Commander, Military Division, Order of the British Empire; Croix de Guerre and Legion of Honor, rank of Commander (France); Philippine Star; Military Order First Class of Guatemala; Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold with Palm (Belgium); The Order of Orange Nassau, degree of Grand Officer, with swords (Netherlands); and the William E. Mitchell Memorial Award.

The General is a familiar figure throughout the country, having spoken to large audiences in numerous cities and towns in furtherance of the Air Force mission of national defense and preservation of the American way of life. His rugged face, under his crew-cut bristly hair, has appeared in magazines and newspapers with consistent regularity. His conversation, based on a prodigious memory, is expressed in colorful and interesting language,

enlivened by a keen sense of humor and a genuine liking for people. He has a frank and disarming cordiality with everyone he meets.

Twice he has taken to a pencil and lined tabled to talk about his experiences and associations during the Pacific War, the result being two published books: "General Kenney Reports" and "The MacArthur I Know."

The General's plans for the future are indefinite, but he has made it emphatically clear that his enforced retirement does not mean curtains. He will be active in some work for a long time to come.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION
PRESS BRANCH

GEORGE C. KENNY

General George C. Kenney, veteran leader of strategic air units was born at Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, on August 6, 1889. He attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology at Cambridge, Massachusetts, for three years.

At the outbreak of World War I, he enlisted as a flying cadet in the Aviation Section of the Signal Reserve in June, 1917. After he completed the course, he was commissioned a temporary first lieutenant in the Aviation Section of the Signal Reserve.

His first commissioned service was with the 14th Foreign Detachment, with which he sailed for France in November, 1917. After completing a course in advanced flying in France, he was assigned to the 91st Aero Squadron in February, 1918. He was on duty with this organization for the ensuing sixteen months. In this service, Lieutenant Kenney accumulated more than 110 hours of flying over the front lines of the Toul and Meuse-Argonne sectors, and engaged in twelve combats. He was credited with the destruction in aerial combat of two enemy aircraft.

During the latter part of his overseas service, he was flight commander of the 91st Aero Squadron, serving with the American Forces in Germany at Treves and Coblenz until June, 1919, when he returned to the United States.

In the fall of 1919, Kenney was assigned to the Eighth Aero Squadron at McAllen, Texas. In 1925, he entered the Air Corps Tactical School at Langley Field, Virginia, and was graduated the following year. In June, 1927, he completed the course at Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, then returned to Langley Field as an instructor at the Tactical School. In 1929 he made a complete survey of possible airdrome locations in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and selected the sites now being used as military airdromes.

He graduated from the Army War College in 1933.

In 1939, Kenney became chief of production at Wright Field, Ohio. The following year he served as Assistant Attache for Air in Paris, observing tactical operations on the Franco-German front and studying technical developments made in military aircraft and equipment by both sides. As a result of his observations, a large number of improvements were made in our military aircraft over a year prior to our actual entry into World War II.

In March, 1942, he went to the West Coast to assume command of the Fourth Air Force, and in July of that year he assumed command of Allied Air Forces in the Southwest Pacific, and also the Fifth

MORE

Air Force. In June, 1944, in addition to his Allied Air Command, he was given command of the Far East Air Forces which combined the Fifth and 13th Air Forces. Under General MacArthur, he directed the successful air war against the Japanese for more than three years through the Southwest Pacific theater from Australia to the Philippines.

In December, 1945, he was assigned to temporary duty with the Military Staff Committee, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D. C., and was sent to London for the duration of the United Nations Conference. He continued temporary duty with the Military Staff Committee when they moved to New York in March, 1946.

In April, 1946, he was designated commanding general of Strategic Air Command, with headquarters at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. On October 15, 1948, he assumed command of the Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

General Kenney has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross with one Cluster, and the Purple Heart, and is an Honorary Knight Commander, Military Division, Order of the British Empire.

The General is short and of stocky build. His wiry gray hair is worn in a crew cut which bristles above his square, rugged face. His conversation is punctuated with remarks stemming from a keen and lively sense of humor and expressed in picturesque and interesting language. A frank and disarming cordiality in dealing with his associates and subordinates makes him exceedingly popular with his men.

He and his wife, Mrs. Alice Kenney, have two children, First Lieutenant William R. Kenney, and Julia, who is married to an Air Force officer.

PROMOTIONS

He was commissioned a first lieutenant in the Aviation Section of the Signal Reserve on November 5, 1917, and was promoted to captain on March 18, 1919. He was commissioned a captain (temporary) in the Air Service of the Regular Army on July 1, 1920. He reverted to the rank of first lieutenant on November 18, 1922, and was promoted to captain (permanent) on November 3, 1923, and to lieutenant colonel (temporary) on March 2, 1935. He reverted to the rank of major (temporary) on June 12, 1936, and was promoted to major (permanent) on October 1, 1937; to lieutenant colonel (temporary) on March 1, 1940; to lieutenant colonel (permanent) on November 29, 1940; to brigadier general (temporary) on January 29, 1941; to major general (temporary) on February 26, 1942; to lieutenant general (temporary) on October 15, 1942; to brigadier general (permanent) on September 1, 1943; to major general (permanent) on February 1, 1945; to general (temporary) on March 9, 1945.

E N D

Up to date as of 15 October 1948

GENERAL GEORGE CHURCHILL KENNEY

General George Churchill Kenney, stocky, bristly-haired commanding general of Air University, was a pilot in World War I and Allied Air Force Commander in the Southwest Pacific Theater in World War II.

General Douglas MacArthur said, in describing him during the Pacific War: "General Kenney is unquestionably one of the best qualified air officers in the world today."

At the same time he was being called "a soldier's general" by "his kids", the officers and airmen of his command whose admiration and respect he won immediately.

A third appraisal was that of "a most unorthodox commander", a title of acclaim accorded him by appreciative correspondence and military analysts attached to his headquarters.

In these three estimates lie the qualities and characteristics that raised General Kenney from a First Lieutenant to a Four-Star General in the years between the first and close of the second world conflicts. They embody his dynamic energy, his imaginative yet efficient approach to baffling problems, and his ability to inspire his men. These, coupled with his professional knowledge gained as a pilot and engineer expert, produced the "unorthodox" tactics which turned the tide of battle in the Pacific.

He introduced skip bombing and developed low altitude tactics which made the Nipponese Navy a duck hunt for his Air Forces. He scrapped the tech manuals and mounted eight and later twelve .50 caliber guns in the fuselage and nose of his B-25 Mitchells and six in the A-20 Bostons making them the terrors of the Pacific. He invented the destructive Parachute Bomb and produced countless other bomb improvisations until they, in his own words, "sang all the notes in the scale, out through trees two inches thick and a hundred feet away like a knife, and when they land in the jungle, slash enough room for a baseball diamond minus Japs."

He drove his men to perform miraculous deeds with the limited equipment while he pressed Washington for more planes in the early days of the War. And at all times he enjoyed this great opportunity to prove in fact the doctrine that he had been preaching since Bill Mitchell's day, that air power was the beginning and end of modern martial movement and a primary weapon of decision in warfare.

Kenney was born August 6, 1889 in Nova Scotia where his family was vacationing. They returned to the family home in Brookline, Massachusetts, shortly thereafter.

Kenney attended grade and high school in Brookline, Massachusetts, and spent three years at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His interest was turned to aviation at that time when he saw a Blériot being demonstrated over Boston Harbor one day. He and two equally aviation-minded young comrades thereupon began construction on a plane of their own. The result was an aircraft that taxied with all the fury and promise of a modern B-29 but left the ground only when it hit a rock and bounced into a glide.

The start of the first World War found Kenney enrolled in the ranks of aviation cadets. His flying instructor for the brief period that constituted training in those days was Bert Acosta who later was to win world acclaim for his personal flights. The General still recalls the day Acosta asked if he thought he was ready to solo after one hour and forty minutes' instruction. He nodded eagerly but lost some of his enthusiasm when he found himself alone in the plane. In fact he circled the field seven times before he remembered to retard the throttle so he could land.

Kenney shipped overseas with seventeen flying hours to his credit and an abundance of self-confidence. He flew seventy-five missions, shot down two German planes and was shot down once himself. He ended the war a captain with the Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star.

It was during this period that General Kenney, like most pilots, acquired a good luck charm which has remained with him to this day. While taking his advanced flying training at Issoudun, France, he was given a pair of ivory dice by a local priest who blessed them that they might safeguard the pilot through his career. The two most memorable occasions the General can recall being without the dice since, were his crash in France during the first World War and a forced landing at Langley Field, Virginia, several years later. The dice became a familiar sight at Pacific Air Command headquarters in World War II when the General produced them for one throw just before some crucial air operation. The string of "naturals" coinciding with the aerial victories over Japs confirmed his faith in his talisman.

The years between 1919 and 1939 saw Kenney proceed through the regular steps of advancement open to the peacetime officer. He concentrated on aeronautical development and its application to warfare during this phase of his AAF career. His military schooling included Air Corps Engineering School, 1920; Air Corps Tactical School, 1925; Command and General Staff School, 1926; and Army War College, 1932.

In 1924 he registered his initial "first" when he became the first man to fix machine guns in the wings of a plane. He installed two .30 caliber Brownings in the wings of an old DeHaviland and demonstrated this revolutionary method of increasing the firepower of aircraft.

In the prewar expansion period in 1939 Kenney, a major, became Chief of Production at Wright Field. A year later he went to France as Assistant Military Attache and was promoted to Lt. Colonel. Returning to Wright Field after his tour of duty in France he became Technical Executive and later, Commander of the Experimental Depot and Engineering School with the rank of Brigadier General. He never held the rank of Colonel, an omission which, the General said at that time, "would probably be corrected on the way down after the war."

In March 1942, he moved up to Major General and out to the West Coast to assume command of the Fourth Air Force. Four and one-half months later, in July, he arrived in the Southwest Pacific to become Commanding General of the Allied Air Forces in that Theater. The Japs were in complete control of the air, being contested by less than ten serviceable Fortresses and a handful of fighters. The immensity of the task of building an allied air fleet was apparent to General Kenney when he remarked with his characteristic candor to

a reporter, "Nobody is kidding me about this show!"

The General's first task was to establish maintenance shops on the "firing line" to keep airborne the few planes available to him. Then, infusing his staff with his own energy and enthusiasm, he made his favorite expression "Hell, let's try it!" the creed for handling all approaches to the obstacles present in the Pacific Jungle theater. General Kenney threw out the "books" because, in his own words, "There is nothing in them that approaches this situation, anyway."

He had his staff develop a skip-bombing technique which proved effective against enemy shipping, but this still didn't satisfy him. He then asked for a special fuse bomb which could be lobbed against the side of the ships by "buzzing" aircraft. This operation required an on-the-deck flight approach that would make the plane a ready target for deck gun crews. To combat this enemy fire General Kenney mounted first eight and later twelve .50 caliber guns on the B-25's and six in the F-20's and experimented with them till the "bugs" were out. This produced a firepower that silenced the deck guns and paved an effective weapon in clearing the jungles of enemy ground troops.

One well known payoff came in March 1943 in the Bismarck Sea when Kenney's air armada intercepted a Jap convoy of cargo and transport vessels escorted by destroyers and heavily defended by fighter aircraft. The convoy was practically annihilated and ninety-five Nip fighters were blasted from the sky at a cost of only four allied aircraft. This Jap attempt to reinforce the Lee garrisons in New Guinea failed and as a result of this disaster the Jap High Command at Tokyo decided that no more convoys were to attempt the voyage to Lee.

In a little more than a year after his arrival General Kenney's air forces had beaten off the Japanese aerial attacks in Australia and approaches, bombed Jap bases to the North, during the Papuan campaign supplied by air an entire allied force of two divisions with materiel, troops, ammunition, hospitals, etc., driven to cover the portion of the Jap shipping they hadn't sunk, and wrested superiority of the air in the Southwest Pacific. The Paratroop operation at Nadzab, New Guinea, and the seizing of the Markham-Ramu Valley, during the fall of 1943, with an airborne, air supplied infantry division are still regarded as models of this type of warfare.

During the three years he conducted the successful air war against the Japanese, in addition to leading the Allied Air Forces, the General became Commanding General, Far East Air Forces and, following the Japanese surrender, Commanding General, Pacific Air Command. He added a third star in September 1942, and a fourth star in March 1945.

Returning to the States after the war General Kenney served as Senior United States Military Representative on the Military Staff Committee of the United Nations from January 1, 1946 to October 15, 1946.

General Kenney was Commanding General of the Strategic Air Command prior to assuming command of the Air University on October 29, 1948.

General Kenney has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster; Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; Silver Star;

Distinguished Flying Cross; Purple Heart; and Honorary Knight Commander, Military Division, Order of the British Empire.

Additional decorations awarded to General Kenney include: Philippine Star; Military Order First Class of Guatemala; Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold with Palm (Belgium); the Croix de Guerre 1940 with Palm (Belgium); The Order of Orange Nassau, degree of Grand Officer, with sword (Netherlands); the William E. Mitchell Memorial Award, French Croix de Guerre, and the French Legion of Honor, rank of commander.

The General is short and of stocky build. His wiry gray hair is worn in a crew cut which bristles above his square, rugged face. His conversation is punctuated with remarks stemming from a keen and lively sense of humor and expressed in picturesque and interesting language. He has a frank and disarming cordiality in dealing with his men.

General and Mrs. Kenney reside on Maxwell Air Force Base. A son, William, is a First Lieutenant in the United States Air Force, and a daughter, Julia, is married to Lt. E. C. Hoagland, USAF.







"CORKY" RECEIVES LATE FATHER'S DFC—Five-year-old "Corky", Henry L.

Condon, III, son of Mrs Mattie L. Condon, 618 S. Perry St., Montgomery, is shown

above being presented the Distinguished Flying Cross which was one of many

posthumous ~~awards~~ decorations awarded his late father, Major Henry L. Condon,

342nd Sq, 475th Army fighter pilot who was killed in action January 3, 1945 on a mission in the Philippines. 750

General George C. Kenney, commanding general, Air University, (left above) ~~presented~~

pinned the medal on young "Corky", after presenting the DFC, Air Medal with seven the widow, Mrs. Condon, with

Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart, Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Service

Medal, American Campaign Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with battle

participation credits for the New Guinea, Northern Solomons, Bismark-Archipelago,

Western Pacific and Leyte campaigns, World War II Victory Medal, Distinguished

Unit Emblem with two Oak Leaf Clusters (this award included an accolade signed by

President Truman as a tangible expression of the country's gratitude for the major's

gallantry and devotion), and his aviation badge (pilot wings). The ceremony was held

Monday morning in the presence of ~~several members of the late pilot's family, in~~

~~several other members of the late pilot's family: his father, Mr J.C.~~

Condon, Birmingham; two young sisters, Pat and Fay, Birmingham; and his brother-in-

law and sister, Mr and Mrs C.M. Canon, Jr., of Opelika. Mrs. Inice T. Condon, of

Opelika, ~~his mother~~ his mother, was not able to attend the ceremony. ~~As commanding~~

~~presenting the posthumous DFC to the late pilot's family, General Kenney~~ As commanding

general of the Far East Air Forces in the Pacific during the war, General Kenney

signed the citations which ~~xxx~~ awarded the various decorations to ~~the~~ Condon.



